

We recognize that no single group in our society has done more to build America and to shape our national character than our nearly thirty-three million older citizens. We treasure their continuing involvement and the unique understanding they bring to us. Their wisdom, experience, insights, and accomplishments merit an invaluable place in our culture and economy.

Through hard work and creativity, our older Americans have made enormous contributions throughout their lives to preserve our way of life and our standard of living.

Now we must keep faith with them.

It is our responsibility to protect them by reducing inflation—that monster which eats at savings and pensions and destroys the independence and well-being of our older Americans.

Of particular importance to our older citizens is the integrity of their pension funds. The recent rise in business confidence and the resulting surge in the net worth of investments have significantly increased the value of America's pension funds. These developments remind us that the most important step we can take for all Americans, but especially our senior citizens, is to follow economic policies that will create noninflationary growth.

It is also our responsibility to keep faith with our older citizens by guaranteeing a secure and stable social security system so they might live in dignity. The recent amendments to the Social Security Act assure the elderly that America will always uphold the promises made in troubled times a half-century ago.

The future of our older Americans should be as sweet as the memories of their youth. I believe the future for our older citizens holds as much promise as the achievements of their past. In this twenty-first annual observance of Older Americans Month, we celebrate that potential.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of May 1983 as Older Americans Month. I ask public officials at all levels, community agencies, educators, the clergy, the communications media, and the American people to take this opportunity to honor older Americans and to consider how we may make it possible for them to enjoy their later years.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5059 of May 10, 1983

Flag Day and National Flag Week, 1983

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Two hundred eight years ago, the first distinctive American flags were flown over the colonial defenses during the Battle of Bunker Hill. One flag

was an adaptation of the British Blue Ensign while the other had a new design. Both flags bore a pine tree, symbol of the struggle colonial Americans undertook to wrest their land from the forests.

As the colonials moved toward a final separation from Britain, other flags with various symbols appeared to inform the world of the hopes, dreams, and challenges of the new Nation. Many of the early American flags carried such mottoes as "Liberty or Death" or "Don't Tread on Me" to reflect the courage and quest for freedom which motivated our forefathers and gave birth to our Nation.

Two years after the Battle of Bunker Hill, the Continental Congress chose a flag which, tellingly, expressed the unity and resolve of the patriots who had banded together to seek independence. The delegates voted "that the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field representing a new constellation." Two centuries later, with the addition of thirty-seven stars, this flag still symbolizes our shared commitment to freedom and equality. It carries a message of hope to the downtrodden, opportunity to the oppressed, and peace to all mankind.

As challenges face our Nation today, the "Stars and Stripes" continues to remind each of us of the sacrifices and determination which built this Nation. It signals the great land of opportunity that our forefathers carved out of the wilderness and gave their lives to make free so many years ago.

Now it is our responsibility to remember the great price that has been paid to keep our flag flying free today and our privilege to ensure that it will keep flying free for future generations.

To commemorate the adoption of our flag, the Congress, by a joint resolution approved August 3, 1949 (63 Stat. 492), designated June 14 of each year as Flag Day and requested the President to issue an annual proclamation calling for its observance and the display of the flag of the United States on all Government buildings. The Congress also requested the President, by a joint resolution approved June 9, 1966 (80 Stat. 194), to issue annually a proclamation designating the week in which June 14 occurs as National Flag Week and calling upon all citizens of the United States to display the flag during that week.

36 USC 157.

36 USC 157a.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate June 14, 1983, as Flag Day and the week beginning June 12, 1983, as National Flag Week, and I direct the appropriate officials of the Government to display the flag on all government buildings during that week. I urge all Americans to observe Flag Day, June 14, and National Flag Week by flying the "Stars and Stripes" from their homes and other suitable places.

I also urge the American people to celebrate those days from Flag Day through Independence Day, set aside by Congress as a time to honor America (89 Stat. 211), by having public gatherings and activities at which they can honor their country in an appropriate manner.

36 USC 157b.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 10th day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

RONALD REAGAN